THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions.

1. (currently amended) A pair of oligonucleotide primers, for use as a single primer set in the amplification of a target sequence located within the LTR region of the genome of HIV-1, said primer pair consisting ~~essentially~~ of a first hybridizing oligonucleotide being ~~10~~15-26 nucleotides in length and comprising at least a fragment of ~~10~~15 sequential nucleotides of a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
SEQ ID 1: G GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA;
SEQ ID 2: G TTC GGG CGC CAC TGC TAG A;
SEQ ID 3: CGG GCG CCA CTG CTA;
and a second hybridizing oligonucleotide being ~~10~~15-26 nucleotides in length and comprising at least a fragment of ~~10~~15 sequential nucleotides of a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
SEQ ID 4: CTG CTT AAA GCC TCA ATA AA; and
SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

2. (currently amended) The pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 3, consisting ~~essentially~~ of a first oligonucleotide being ~~10~~15-26 nucleotides in length and comprising at least a fragment of ~~10~~15 sequential nucleotides of the sequence: SEQ ID1: G GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA; and a second oligonucleotide being ~~10~~15-26 nucleotides in length and comprising at least a fragment of ~~10~~15 sequential nucleotides of the sequence SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

3. (previously presented) Use of the pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 1 in a nucleic acid amplification reaction or as a probe for the detection of HIV nucleic acid in a sample.

4. (previously presented) The pair of oligonucleotides according to claim

3, consisting of a first oligonucleotide comprising the sequence of SEQ ID 9: aat tct aat acg act cac tat agg gAG AGG GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA and a second oligonucleotide comprising the sequence of SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

5. (previously presented) A method for the detection of HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, comprising the steps of subjecting the sample to a nucleic acid amplification reaction under suitable conditions using a pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 1, and suitable amplification reagents, and detecting the presence of amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid.

6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the detection of amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid is carried out by reacting the sample with one or more oligonucleotide probes having a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
SEQ ID 6: TCT GGT AAC TAG AGA TCC CTC
SEQ ID 7: TAG TGT GTG CCC GTC TGT or
SEQ ID 8: AGT GTG TGC CCG TCT GTT,
one or more of which are provided with a detectable label, under suitable hybridization conditions, and detecting the presence of the label in any hybrids formed between the amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid and the one or more probes.

7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the amplification reaction is a transcription based amplification reaction.

8. (previously presented) A test kit for the detection of HIV-1 in a sample comprising:

a pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 1;

one or more oligonucleotides comprising a nucleic acid sequence substantially complementary to at least part of the amplified nucleic acid sequence, provided with a detectable label; and suitable amplification reagents.

9. (previously presented) A test for the detection of HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, wherein the sample is subjected to a nucleic acid amplification reaction using a pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 4 and suitable amplification reagents and the presence of any amplified nucleic acid is detected.

10. (canceled)

11. (previously presented) A method for amplifying HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, comprising the step of subjecting the sample to a nucleic acid amplification reaction under suitable conditions using a pair of oligonucleotides according to claim 1, and suitable amplification reagents.

12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the amplification reaction is a transcription based amplification reaction.

13. (previously presented) A pair of oligonucleotide primers consisting of:

(i) a first hybridizing oligonucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

SEQ ID 1: G GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA;

SEQ ID 2: G TTC GGG CGC CAC TGC TAG A;

SEQ ID 3: CGG GCG CCA CTG CTA; and

SEQ ID 9: aat tct aat acg act cac tat agg gAG AGG GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA; and

(ii) a second hybridizing oligonucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

SEQ ID 4: CTG CTT AAA GCC TCA ATA AA; and

SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

14. (previously presented) A method for the detection of HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, comprising the steps of subjecting the sample to a nucleic acid amplification reaction under suitable conditions using a pair of oligonucleotides

according to claim 13, and suitable amplification reagents, and detecting the presence of amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid.

15. (previously presented) The pair of oligonucleotide primers of claim 13, wherein said first hybridizing oligonucleotide is SEQ ID 9: aat tct aat acg act cac tat agg gAG AGG GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA and wherein said second hybridizing oligonucleotide is SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

16. (previously presented) The pair of oligonucleotide primers of claim 13, wherein said first hybridizing oligonucleotide is SEQ ID 1: G GGC GCC ACT GCT AGA GA and wherein said second hybridizing oligonucleotide is SEQ ID 5: CTC AAT AAA GCT TGC CTT GA.

17. (previously presented) A method for the detection of HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, comprising the steps of subjecting the sample to a nucleic acid amplification reaction under suitable conditions using the pair of oligonucleotide primers of claim 15, and suitable amplification reagents, and detecting the presence of amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid.

18. (previously presented) A method for the detection of HIV-1 nucleic acid in a sample, comprising the steps of subjecting the sample to a nucleic acid amplification reaction under suitable conditions using the pair of oligonucleotide primers of claim 16, and suitable amplification reagents, and detecting the presence of amplified HIV-1 nucleic acid.